Amber severe weather warning as storms expected for UK

18 July 2014 - An amber severe weather warning for parts of the UK has been issued by the Met Office as intense thunderstorms are expected through Friday night and the weekend which could cause disruption.

The first pulse of storms is expected to come through late on Friday and into the early hours of Saturday, as an area of possibly intense thunderstorms move north from the continent.

These are likely to extend up through parts of England and Wales, potentially moving into parts of Scotland by the afternoon.

Thunderstorms may also generate over the UK as temperatures rise through Saturday afternoon, before another pulse of storms is likely to move up from the continent later on.

While many areas may not see any thunderstorms, where they do form they could bring torrential downpours, frequent lightning, large hail and strong gusts of wind.

Paul Gundersen, chief meteorologist for the Met Office, said: "We have storms affecting parts of the UK from three separate sources, each having the potential to affect slightly different areas at different times of the day.

"This means a large area is at potential risk from these storms, as identified by the amber warning, but not everywhere will see them - some spots could see a relatively fine day.

"This alert identifies the area of risk and where the thunderstorms do form we could see localised flooding, as well as the risks that go with lightning and hail. We'd advise people to stay up to date with our latest forecasts and warnings as the situation progresses."

People can track the progress of any areas of rainfall as they move across the UK using the radar imagery on our website and mobile apps.

On Sunday, the risk of storms moves to the eastern part of the country while other parts of the UK should see a generally more settled day. This more settled theme is expected to continue into the start of next week, while temperatures are set to stay warmer than average for the time of year.

The thunderstorms we're expecting are due to warm and humid air moving up from the continent, which has seen temperatures rise and a Heat-health alert issued for parts of the UK.

As this warm air collides with less warm air from the Atlantic, it's forced to rapidly rise which - in the right conditions - can lead to the formation of intense thunderstorms. This set of meteorological conditions is known as a Spanish plume - you can read more about this on our blog .

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